

# **TOK Essay Outline, Question: ‘The possession of knowledge carries an ethical responsibility.’ Evaluate this claim.**

## **I. Introduction**

### **A. Main thesis:**

1. Those who possess knowledge are capable of leadership, leadership can essentially influence an individual's or society's moral and ethical values. Therefore individuals in possession of certain knowledge have the ability to determine their own ethics and hence change the external dynamics to their advantage; but is right for them to do so? Is having the upper hand right?

## **II. Body**

### **A. How do the leaders in science influence the direction society is heading and how does science justify moral reasoning and ethical values?**

1. What role does religion have?
  - a) Religion adhere to certain beliefs which are expressed by certain people who therefore have influence over their followers.

- b) The Catholic church for example have historically had a heavy influence on European politics, the intrigue and internal conflicts occurring within the Vatican often resonated elsewhere in Europe. But what made them right? Where the various conflicts in Europe, as a result of the Catholic church, morally justified? Are they held ethically responsible?
2. Scientists have made discoveries which have changed the world, but what measures have there been to make them accountable for those actions, if not, what has made them exempt. What allows science to be associated for the betterment of man kind.
- a) Oppenheimer who invented the atom bomb was not held responsible for Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Alfred Nobel too was not held accountable for dynamite.
  - b) What forces have justified or allowed scientists not to be held ethically responsible?
    - (1) Political?
    - (2) Social?
    - (3) Economic?
    - (4) Physiological?